

Homes by Architects Tour

Call for Entries

Purpose

The Homes by Architects Tour, founded by AIA Minnesota in 2008, is a two-day event and public outreach opportunity where architect-designed homes from around the state are showcased to a public audience.

By showcasing the highest-quality new and remodeled, architect-designed homes from a range of project types, sizes, budgets, and sites, the event strives to demonstrate the value of architect-led residential design and educate the public about the quality and diversity of skills an architect can offer.

Additionally, the tour provides an opportunity for AIA Minnesota members to promote their services, expand their client base, and showcase their high-quality work.

Event Dates

The Homes by Architects Tour is a hybrid event. Homes will be available to tour in person on Saturday, September 27 and Sunday, September 28, 2025, from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm each day. A virtual tour will be available to view online Saturday, September 27–Sunday, October 12.

Eligibility

Residential projects designed by a registered architect, or a team where a registered architect is the lead designer, who is a current AIA Minnesota member are eligible. Projects may be new construction, remodels, or additions, and must have been completed within the past six years (as of January 1, 2025) or must be scheduled for completion by July 15, 2025. “In-person” tour projects must be located within a one-hour’s drive from the Minneapolis–St. Paul Airport.

Projects should exemplify the best qualities of an architect’s work, demonstrate an innovative use of design solutions and/or materials, and tell a compelling story. Projects may not be for sale before or during the tour. Custom vacation homes or accessory dwelling units built with the intention to be rented out are allowed.

No firm may have more than 25 percent of the homes on the tour, and no single architect may have more than two projects on the tour.

Small Projects Showcase

The 2025 tour is the second year of the Small Projects Showcase pilot. In addition to supporting the tour’s overall goals above, this pilot aims to showcase the value of working with an architect for projects that are smaller than those historically shown on the tour, with a lower participation fee for the firms.

Core differences between a standard tour home and small project include:

- **Small projects will receive a half-page in the tour program** instead of a full page
- **Firms will have to staff the greeter table**

See a detailed tour project-type comparison at the end of this document.

Choose to Show Your Project In-Person, Virtual, or Both Ways

AIA Minnesota is pleased to offer three options for showcasing your project:

1. In-person only
2. Virtual only
3. Both in-person and virtual

For **virtual** tour homes, the project is showcased online through photography and videos (provided by the architect) and via a virtual Matterport tour. If the home is virtual only (Option #2), the physical property address will not be disclosed and no tour goers will have in-person access to the home.

Step 1: Submission Process

By completing a submission, you are not ensured a spot on the tour (see next section). To submit a project for consideration of inclusion on the tour, the following information is required:

- **Project information:** address, project type, square footage, date of completion, descriptions
- **Entrant information:** firm information, design team names, firm logo, architect headshot or team photo
- **Project images:** high-resolution, print-ready project photos or, if no print-ready photos are available at the time of submission, renderings, sketches, plans, construction photos, or scouting shots; “before” photos required for remodels and additions
- **Floor plan:** “before” floor plans are required for remodels and additions.
- **“Flow” plan:** Required for Small Projects only; not applicable to Standard Homes. Floor plan(s) indicating a preliminary plan for tour-goer flow through the space.
- **Consent forms:** signed Homeowner Consent Form, signed Architect Agreement
- **Supplier Information:** list of all project partners along with contact information for each
- **AIA Framework for Design Excellence:** Paragraph on how the project demonstrates at least one [AIA Framework for Design Excellence category](#)
- **Sustainability:** Description of sustainable design elements and/or processes

Materials must be submitted electronically using [AIA Minnesota’s online awards platform](#). The deadline to submit projects without paying a late fee penalty is **Friday, April 19, 2025 by 12:00 pm noon CT**.

After this date, any projects accepted on the tour will be subject to a \$100 late fee.

Step 2: Selection Process & Criteria

A submission is considered complete when all portions of the application are completed and signed, including signed consent from the homeowners to participate in the tour if their home is selected. **By completing a submission, you are not ensured a spot on the tour.**

Members of the AIA Minnesota residential architecture committee will review all submitted projects by May 9, 2025, and evaluate each one fairly and objectively, with a primary goal of selecting a diverse and representative range of project types, scopes, budgets, and sites that best support the programmatic objectives of the tour. All submissions are subject to final approval by AIA Minnesota staff.

Submissions are evaluated by the committee using the following questions:

- Does the project demonstrate innovative use of design solutions and/or materials?
- Does the project tell a compelling story that would be appealing to a broad audience?
- Does the project illustrate the value of architectural services in the design solutions?
- Does the project feature sustainable design elements and/or processes?
- Taking into consideration the other tour submissions, how well would this project add variety to the tour?

In-person tour projects may be asked to re-submit for a future tour if there are no other tour projects in the home's vicinity. Virtual tour projects may be asked to re-submit for a future tour if there are fewer than three virtual tour projects total.

Step 3: Confirmation of Projects & Payment of Participation Fees

Following completion of the selection process, all submitters will be notified of the outcome. Submitters whose projects were selected for inclusion on the tour will be invited to attend an orientation session and participation fees will be collected.

- In-person Standard Home format participation fee: \$2,600
- In-person Small Project Showcase participation fee: \$1,250
- Virtual format participation fee: \$400 + the cost of the Matterport filming*
- Virtual format participation fee if firm owns and is willing to use their own Matterport camera**: \$400

**AIA Minnesota staff will, to the best of their ability, research potential vendors and get quotes to share with the architecture firm. Architecture firm will coordinate Matterport scheduling and pay the vendor directly.*

***Subject to AIA Minnesota staff verification of firm's ability to produce a Matterport virtual tour that meets the tour's quality standards.*

Participants may choose from two payment schedule options:

- **Plan A.** Payment in full by May 31, 2025.
- **Plan B.** Two installments: initial payment of 50% of participation fee on May 31 and final payment of remaining amount plus 10% administrative fee by June 30, 2025.

Questions

Contact Ann Mayhew at (612) 767-1740 or mayhew@aia-mn.org.

Homes by Architects Tour 2024: Home Types Comparision

This is not an exhaustive list of deadlines, requirements, or expectations for firms submitting homes to the tour. For firms planning to submit homes, they should also refer to the Call for Entries and Architect Agreement for full details.

	Standard Tour Home	NEW: Small Projects	Virtual Home
Eligibility			
Designer	Designed by a registered architect, or a team where a registered architect is the lead designer, who is a current AIA Minnesota member		
Project Type	New construction OR significant remodels or additions (majority of house was changed)	Under 600 sf	New construction OR significant remodels or additions (majority of house was changed)
Project Completion Date	Completed within the past six years (as of January 1, 2025) or scheduled for completion by July 15, 2025		
Additional Requirements	<p>No firm may have more than 25 percent of the homes on the tour, and no single architect may have more than two projects on the tour.</p> <p>Home must be owner-occupied or a vacation rental. Homes cannot be for sale before or during the tour.</p>	<p>No firm may have more than 25 percent of the homes on the tour, and no single architect may have more than two projects on the tour.</p> <p>Home must be owner-occupied or a vacation rental. Homes cannot be for sale before or during the tour.</p>	<p>No firm may have more than 25 percent of the homes on the tour, and no single architect may have more than two projects on the tour.</p> <p>Home must be owner-occupied or a vacation rental. Homes cannot be for sale before or during the tour.</p>
Fee			
Submission Fee	\$0		
Participation Fee	\$2,600	\$1,250	\$400 + firm will need to pay for the Matterport scanning (variable)
Architecture Firm Responsibilities			
Documentation	Required to provide: COO (new construction); Certificate of Liability with AIA Minnesota as additional insured; Architect Agreement; Homeowner Consent Form; Vendor List	Required to provide: COO (new construction); Certificate of Liability with AIA Minnesota as additional insured; Architect Agreement; Homeowner Consent Form; Vendor List "Before" photos and a "flow" plan are REQUIRED to demonstrate the architectural enhancements in the submission.	Required to provide: Architect Agreement; Homeowner Consent Form; Vendor List
Staffing/volunteers	Provides staff inside home	Provides staff inside home AND greeter volunteers; greeter volunteers agree to attend volunteer training	n/a

Home preparation	Home must be clean and presentable with valuables removed or secured for tour; firm may create any desired signage or takeaways (following sponsor rules)	Home must be clean and presentable with valuables removed or secured for tour — INCLUDING all areas visible on tour guests' path to/from the addition/remodeled space; firm may create any desired signage or takeaways (following sponsor rules)	Home must be clean and presentable for Matterport scan
AIA Minnesota Responsibilities			
Staffing/volunteers	Provides greeter volunteers	None	n/a
Signage	Provides wayfinding signage & house number sign; provides optional printable signs of tour rules for firm to print & place inside home		n/a
Submission Review Criteria			
Does the project demonstrate innovative use of design solutions and/or materials?			
Does the project tell a compelling story that would be appealing to a broad audience?			
Does the project illustrate the value of architectural services in the design solutions?			
Does this project demonstrate sustainable design?			
Publicity			
Printed & PDF tour program	full-page	half-page	full-page
Website	Individual page on public site; photo gallery on virtual tour	Individual page on public site; photo gallery on virtual tour	Individual page on public site; featured on virtual tour with Matterport, photo gallery, and optional videos
Social media	# of posts spotlighting individual project consistent with other standard and virtual projects, based on total number of projects	reduced number of posts spotlighting individual projects in comparison to standard & virtual homes; greater inclusion in posts highlighting multiple small projects	# of posts spotlighting individual project consistent with other standard and virtual projects, based on total number of projects
Marketing	may be featured in advertisements based on PR firm's discretion	may be featured in advertisements based on PR firm's discretion	may be featured in advertisements based on PR firm's discretion
Virtual Tour Presence*			
Photo gallery	Yes	Yes	Yes
Matterport	No	No	Yes
Architect and/or client interview	No	No	Yes; optional
Virtual event with Matterport walk-through & Q&A	No	No	Yes; optional
Option to add additional videos provided by architecture firm	No	No	Yes; optional
<i>*Standard Tour Homes may opt to be both virtual and in-person.</i>			